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POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE 1980s

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ABSTRACT

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Currently political participation, especially voter registration and turnout, varies substantially with ethnicity. Blacks and non-Hispanic whites participate at roughly equal rates, while Latinos and Asian-Americans are substantially less active. This variation may reflect cultural factors, or it may be the spurious product of differences in the distribution of non-ethnic determinants of participation, including socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, variables reflecting immigration history, including citizenship, and measures of group identification. Using data collected in 1984 on samples of California's black, Latino, Asian-American, and non-Hispanic white populations, we conclude that these other variables fully account for lower Latino participation rates. Even with such controls, however, Asian-Americans remain less likely to vote. Although non-citizens participate less than citizens, they do engage in non-electoral activities. Finally, we speculate on the future political impact of Latinos and Asian-Americans, by projecting participation rates under several scenarios.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE 1980s*

The combination of recent changes in immigration and differential birthrates have significantly altered the ethnic balance in the United States. While blacks have remained about twelve percent of the population, two other ethnic minorities, Latinos and Asian-Americans, have grown dramatically in size. In the fifties, Europeans constituted 59 percent of legal immigrants, Latinos, 22 percent, and Asians, 6 percent. Two decades later the figures were 18 percent, 41 percent, and 36 percent, respectively. While non-Hispanic white women average 1.7 births each, the birthrate for Latinas is 2.8 and for black women is 2.3. The population shifts have been concentrated in large, politically competitive states, such as Texas, Florida, Illinois, and especially California. In fact, the California population is expected to be less than half non-Hispanic white by the year 2010, after having dropped from 87 percent non-Hispanic white in 1960 to 67 percent in 1980.

The increase in minority populations could prove to be politically important. However, for political effects to appear, two conditions must hold: first, the minority populations must have distinctive political views, and, second, they must participate in politics so that their views make an impact. In this paper we address the second of these issues and examine the current and anticipated levels of political participation by members of ethnic minority groups.[1] Before proceeding, we note that whether or not members of these groups hold distinctive views, the level of their political participation indicates the degree of their integration into the American polity.

There does exist an extensive literature on black-white differences in political activity (e.g. Matthews and Prothro, 1966; Orum, 1966; Olsen, 1970; Verba and Nie, 1972; London and Hearn, 1977; Danigelis, 1978; Shingles, 1981; Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Malanchuk, 1981; Welch and Secret, 1981; Brown, Jackson, and Bowman, 1982; Miller, 1982; Danigelis, 1982; Guterbock and London, 1983) and a growing literature on Latino political participation (Welch, Comer, And Steinman, 1975; Antunes and Gaitz, 1975; Tavlik, 1976; Loverich and Marenin, 1976; Welch, 1977; Guzman, 1976; Buehler, 1977; Rodriguez, 1978; MacManus and Cassel, 1982; Brischetto and de la Garza, 1983; de la Garza and Weaver, 1984). With important exceptions (Kitano, 1969), much less is known about Asian-American political participation. Large national surveys have not been very helpful in this regard because they usually include few Latinos and even fewer Asian-Americans (de la Garza, 1987).[2] Most of the studies that have been done of non-black ethnic minorities have been restricted to a single group and often are based on a local sample. Few (e.g., Antunes and Gaitz, 1975; Loverich and Marenin, 1976) make comparisons across ethnic minority groups. The present study is based upon survey interviews conducted in late 1984 with samples of blacks, Latinos, Asian-Americans, and non-Hispanic whites. It thus allows for comparisons among all major ethnic groups and thereby makes an important contribution to the present state of knowledge of ethnic patterns of political participation in the United States.

Another important contribution of this study is to examine the political behavior of non-citizens. Even before attaining citizenship, non-citizens may participate in the political process in various ways. Indeed, under the one-person, one-vote court rulings they are considered equal to citizens in the apportionment of legislative districts. Moreover, under the amnesty provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, several million more non-citizens, primarily of Latino descent, are expected to begin the process of attaining citizenship by becoming legal alien residents. Over

half of these persons are thought to reside in California. Non-citizens comprise an important yet little-studied pool of current, and potential, participants.

Outside the realm of practical politics, the theoretical debates on the determinants of political participation pose a number of questions which can be addressed by examining the behavior of ethnic populations. Over and above the correlation between socioeconomic resources and participation, various forms of group affiliation can increase activity. Race and ethnicity have historically been important sources of group organization in contemporary America -- does the same apply to the newer immigrant groups?

Finally, these various ethnic groups appear to be culturally distinctive, and the recent immigrants among them come from varied political systems. To the extent that these differences carry over into American experience, they may contribute to differences in political activity among the groups.

Both the practical and the theoretical perspectives lead us to ask certain questions about the political participation of various minority groups. First, how active are members of various ethnic and racial groups in different forms of political participation? Secondly, do differences between the groups simply reflect socioeconomic differences, or does ethnicity itself matter? Thirdly, do we see any signs of group-based mobilization? Finally, how much activity might one expect to see in the future under different scenarios of demographic and political change, and in light of the behavior of non-citizens?

The demographic changes have been most dramatic in California, making California a good site for the study of minorities. To answer the questions posed above, this paper draws upon a California-wide survey of 574 Latinos, 335 blacks, 308 Asian-Americans, and 317 non-Hispanic whites. (For ease of exposition, in the remainder of the text we will refer simply to "whites"

when we mean "non-Hispanic whites," to "Asians" when we mean "Asian-Americans," to "Japanese" for "Japanese-Americans," and so forth. See Appendix B for more detail on the sampling design and sample.[3]) We consider a range of participatory activities. Registering and voting have the most direct electoral consequences, but various campaign activities, the contacting of officials, the direct transmission of opinions to news media, and community action may indirectly affect elections and, perhaps more important, may influence the opinions of others and affect policy.[4]

We first examine the level of political activity across the different ethnic groups. Then we sketch the theoretical framework which shapes our central analysis, the examination of the determinants of participation levels among citizens and non-citizens. Finally, we use the estimated models to forecast participation rates under several alternative scenarios of the future.

LEVELS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION WITHIN ETHNIC GROUPS

Studies of black participation have shown that blacks currently participate at levels very near those of whites; for at least twenty years the rates of black activity have been virtually the same as whites, or higher, once income and education are controlled (Verba and Nie, 1972; Olsen, 1970). Most studies of Latinos and Asian-Americans conclude that they participate less often than members of the majority population. For example, self-reported turnout was twenty percent less for Mexican-Americans in the 1984 National Election Study than it was for non-Hispanic whites. Our data are consistent with these general conclusions.

Table 1 reports the percentages participating. It shows that the ethnic groups differ substantially from each other in the percentage of people engaging in various political activities. Overall, the predominantly

native-born groups -- blacks and whites -- are more politically active than Latinos and Asians.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The differences across groups are particularly striking for registration and voting. Compared with blacks and whites, less than two-thirds as many Latinos and Asians reported they were registered to vote or voted.[5]

Once we take account of the disparities between the racial and ethnic groups in the proportion of their members who are citizens, the differences in participation rates diminish substantially.[6] The second and fourth rows of Table 1 indicate that the registration and voting rates for Latino and Asian citizens come much closer to those for whites and blacks. Moreover, restricting attention to citizens brings white rates nearer to the black level.

For registration and voting, lack of citizenship constitutes an absolute bar to participation. Although non-citizens are legally eligible to participate in most of the other forms of political activities in Table 1 (with the exception of political contributions), we might reasonably expect non-citizens to be less likely to do so. We thus report separately the percentages in each group who are active for citizens, for non-citizens, and for the total sample. Consider the next four activities, all of which are some form of campaign participation (i.e., contributing money, exhibiting a campaign poster or sticker, working for a party or candidate, and attending a political meeting or rally). Virtually identical proportions of whites and blacks report having done these things, while Latinos and Asians say they are less active. When we separate citizens from non-citizens, we find that some non-citizens do participate politically, and that the Latino and Asian citizens are almost as active as whites and blacks.

The next three items concern various types of non-electoral activity. The rough parity between white and black participation breaks down when it comes to contacting elected officials, with whites clearly more likely to do so than blacks. This result is consistent with Verba and Nie's finding (1972, pp. 160-170) that blacks contact officials less than whites, even with controls for group consciousness and social class. On the other hand, blacks in our sample are slightly more likely than whites to say that they have worked with a community group to solve a problem.

As with the electoral activities, controlling for citizenship of Latinos and Asians greatly reduces the disparity between their activity rates and those of whites and blacks. Latino and Asian citizens are about equally likely to contact elected officials and do so less than whites; this similarity among all three groups of ethnic minorities is consistent with Verba and Nie's explanation of their results for blacks. Latino and Asian citizens differ on the last two items; Latino citizens are less likely than blacks or whites to work in groups but contact news media at about the same rate as they do while Asian citizens are as likely as whites to work in groups and more likely than anyone to convey opinions to news media. Although non-citizens are more active than one might expect — one-tenth to one-fifth of them take part in these activities -- they are still much less active than citizens (see also Brischetto and de la Garza, 1983).

To check our impression that there is a first-order relationship between ethnicity and participation even after allowing for differential rates of citizenship, we ran estimations of the various participation variables on dummy variables for ethnicity, among citizens only. Because of the dichotomous nature of the dependent variables, probit analysis was used to estimate this model. (In these and later estimations we omit the three campaign activities other than contributing money due to the low frequency

of activity.) These results are reported in Table 2. The top number in each entry is the maximum likelihood estimate, the bottom number the standard error. Dividing the estimate by the standard error yields the associated t-statistic. All of the ethnic minority groups contact officials less than whites, while there are no differences for contacting media. For all of the other activities, blacks and whites participate at the same rate, while Latinos participate less. Although Asians participate in some activities as much as whites (contacting media and contributing money), on the whole they are less active.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Finally, one might object to grouping all of the Asian respondents into a single category. The Asian sample includes approximately equal numbers of respondents of Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean descent, with a scattering of Vietnamese-Americans and others. We recognize that these groups do not think of themselves as a single "Asian" ethnicity. To see whether their participation rates differ substantially from each other, we repeated the estimation on ethnic dummies breaking the Asian category down into the groups above (with the Vietnamese-Americans grouped with anyone not otherwise classified). We do find some differences by nationality. (See Appendix Table A.1 for the coefficients.) The data suggest that the Japanese, Koreans, and Filipinos are all less likely to register and to vote than whites, while the Chinese are much nearer to whites in their turnout pattern. Japanese are slightly more likely to contribute money than whites, while Filipinos (and perhaps the Other Asian-Americans) are more likely to contact news media.[7] All of the Asian groups are less likely to contact officials than are whites. An apparent surprise is the low coefficient, indicating low participation, for the Japanese on every activity except

contributing money. The Japanese-Americans are economically successful and in many respects highly assimilated into American life (Kitano, 1969).

If we had sufficient cases, we would like to carry through the analysis separately for the various Asian groups. Since we do not have many cases in each separate category, we emphasize that these results are at best suggestive. Beyond statistical necessity, however, we believe there is some justification for aggregating these respondents into a single Asian category. First, the cultural differences between Asian-Americans on the basis of nationality are still relatively small compared to those between native-born and immigrant individuals and between Asian immigrants and those from Latin America. Second, the political environment may be placing pressure on these individuals to think of themselves as "Asian" in a similar fashion to the way Sicilians, Neapolitans, and Florentines became "Italian" in the United States. We think enough can be learned from analysis of the Asians as an aggregated category to proceed.

We have seen that there are differences across groups in amount of political participation. Most notably, Latinos and Asians participate less in politics than do whites or blacks even when we restrict attention to American citizens. We do not yet know, however, whether these differences are related to ethnicity in any meaningful way, or whether instead they are the spurious product of differences in the distribution of non-ethnic determinants of participation. These determinants include demographic and socioeconomic characteristics such as age, education, and birth abroad. In addition, we suspect that the levels of activity reflect varying levels of group identification or group mobilization. These questions will be addressed by developing and estimating a fuller model of political participation.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: PREVIOUS THEORY AND RESEARCH

A large body of previous research has repeatedly shown that political participation is positively associated with several related demographic and economic variables. These variables have been hypothesized to influence decisions regarding participation in several different ways. Some theorists see them as factors which reduce the informational and other costs of participation or increase the stakes of acting. Other theorists emphasize psychological payoffs (e.g., satisfying a sense of civic duty) correlated with these factors. These variables have also been viewed as indicating the level of resources (money, knowledge, free time, etc.) which a person can spend on political activity.[8] In short, interpretations given for why people participate in politics vary considerably more than how the determinants are operationalized.[9]

Whatever one's theoretical predilections, a central task in our analysis is to determine how much of the observed variation in participation among major ethnic groups can be accounted for by variation in background socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. Our survey thus included several questions about respondents' socioeconomic characteristics. Chief among these variables are education and income (Conway, 1985; Campbell, et.al., 1960; Verba and Nie, 1972; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). Previous studies have shown that these factors can account for significant differences in minority and white participation rates (Antunes and Gaitz, 1975; Brischetto and de la Garza, 1983; Buehler, 1977). Respondents are, however, often reticent about reporting income; in this survey 17 percent declined to answer the family income question. For purposes of this analysis we therefore used responses to three other questions which reveal

differences in financial well-being: whether the respondent's family owned or rented their home, whether or not the head of the respondent's household had been unemployed in the previous year, and whether or not the respondent was a single mother. Unemployment has been found to depress turnout in congressional elections (Rosenstone, 1982), although others argue the effect of unemployment is spurious (Schlozman and Verba, 1979). Being a single mother, of course, probably is indicative of lacking free time as well as income.

We also ascertained respondents' age and gender. Older people have consistently been found to be more active politically, although there appears to be a slight drop-off in activity among the very elderly. The usual explanations suggest that as people get older, they get into the habit of political activity, or that experience reduces the costs, or that their stakes in the outcomes increase along with their increasing wealth, property, and families. The very old, however, confront new costs in the form of difficulties getting around. Although gender differences in participation appear to have largely disappeared in recent years, results from earlier studies often found women participated less than men. It is also possible that even if gender differences have declined in the overall population, such differences may persisted in some minority group populations.

Several other factors which affect a potential participant's resources are especially important in analyzing heavily immigrant populations. Not speaking English as a primary language inhibits the acquisition of information and increases the difficulty of certain activities. For those born abroad, longer residence in the United States corresponds to greater opportunities for inexpensive acquisition of political information. In addition, speaking English and living in the U.S. for a greater percentage

of one's life may indirectly measure a greater degree of integration into mainstream American society.

The distribution of these variables across ethnic groups is reported in Table 3. As the figures in this table indicate, Latino citizens are a

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

relatively younger, less well educated population. Latino participation rates could also be depressed by incomplete integration into the American mainstream; approximately one out of seven Latinos in our sample had been born outside of the United States, and over 40 percent retained Spanish as their primary language.

The data on Asians, in contrast, pose something of a puzzle. Their relatively low rates of participation in various political activities are all the more remarkable in light of their high levels of employment, educational attainment, and homeownership, and extremely low number of single mothers. Perhaps, in the case of Asians, the effects associated with these variables, which we would expect to be positive, are swamped by the presumably dampening effects of being born abroad (47 percent of the Asian citizens in our survey were immigrants) or poor English skills. In short, the figures in Table 3 pose more questions than they answer. A multivariate analysis may shed some light on these matters.

The second major component in our analysis considers the effects of an explicit sense of group identification upon ethnic minority political participation. Such effects could compensate for a lack of socioeconomic resources, (as in the case of Latinos or blacks) or detract from them (as is perhaps the case for Asians). A number of researchers have pointed to the role of "group consciousness" in increasing activity (Miller et al., 1981; Verba and Nie, 1972). Others find effects associated with membership in particular cleavage

groups, such as different religions, in the Netherlands, or class/religious groupings, in Austria (Verba, Nie, and Kim, 1978). In both instances the groups in question are politically meaningful (members are presumed to share some significant preferences or to be treated as though they did), and the group resources are hypothesized to substitute for individual resources. In addition, a number of studies show that membership and activity in organizations increase activity (Lipset, 1960; Nie, Powell, and Prewitt, 1969; Verba and Nie, 1972) although this effect likely reflects the learning of transferable skills and attitudes. Group effects, especially those based on the political role of the group, may help explain political mobilization of ethnic minorities (Welch, 1977; Pavlik, 1976; Miller et al., 1981; Brown, Jackson, and Bowman, 1982; Jackson, 1987).

However, this research has not accounted precisely for the link between group interest or group identity and the individual's motive to act. Rational actor theories, on the other hand, provide the possibility of linking group interests and individual action. These theories posit that people act if the benefits of action are greater than the costs. If people are assumed to be expected utility maximizers, the benefit of one candidate winning rather than another is discounted by the (low) probability that an individual's action will alter an outcome (e.g. his or her vote change an election winner). It follows that in a mass election few people would vote (Downs, 1957). The problem has the same form as the general collective action problem (Olson, 1971); namely, when members of large groups each derive only a small benefit from some collective endeavor, group action is liable to founder on the free-rider problem. Consumption goods (roughly equivalent to selective incentives in Olson's terminology) are often proposed to solve the problem of predicted levels of activity far below observed amounts (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968), but Barry (1970) and others argue

that this solution amounts to throwing away the politics in political activity.[10]

Whatever the case, we concur that the low odds of an individual being pivotal to a political outcome imply that instrumental benefits, including perception of a group interest, will rarely outweigh the costs of action. Thus consumption benefits will usually be needed to produce action. We outline here another approach, based upon the observation that an important subset of the consumption goods look like instrumental benefits and perform like them within the larger political system.[11] These consumption goods depend upon the existence both of group affiliations, such as ethnic identities, and of group-specific leaders.[12] Although the vote of one Latino has little influence on an election, both a candidate and a Latino leader can see a non-negligible effect on the probability of winning from a several percent increase in Latino turnout. Intermediary elites can increase turnout by increasing the consumption benefits of action to their members. They will invest resources to do so if the candidate provides enough benefits (policy positions or patronage) in exchange for more support. Thus, the consumption benefits that at the margin bring an individual to act rest upon political trades and promises, instead of simply reflecting early socialization. The net result is that participators motivated by consumption benefits may appear to act out of instrumental motivations, and may in fact ultimately receive instrumental payoffs for their actions. As members of minority groups see their ethnicity as more salient to their identity and see politics as more salient to the group, and if there exists a set of leaders identified with the group, one would expect participation to increase.

Our data provide what we believe to be a useful indicator of group consciousness.[13] After being asked what they believed to be the most important problem facing people in this country today, respondents were then

asked to name problems which they felt were of special concern to members of their racial or ethnic group. Persons who named such a problem, we argue, are conscious of their ethnic group as a politically salient identity connected to a common political interest.

An additional component of an analysis of the impact of group identification upon participation decisions is the existence of competing loyalties. A Catholic Latino working on an assembly line, for instance, might not be naturally inclined to give ethnic interests precedence over occupational or religious ones. Political leadership can enhance a sense of group loyalties. This is essentially what many partisan (e.g., elected officials) and nonpartisan (e.g., the Southwest Voter Registration Drive) minority leaders have attempted to do in recent years. Issues before the legislature can facilitate this process. The prospect of immigration reform, for example, probably heightened the salience of group identity among many Latinos in recent years.[14]

To realistically gauge the impact of ethnic group identification we must also gauge the influence of other, possibly competing, group loyalties. We therefore asked respondents whether there was some other group, in addition to a racial or nationality group, that they felt part of, and that makes them more concerned about certain problems. In Table 4 we report the percentage of each ethnic group, citizens and noncitizens, who said that there were problems of special concern to people of their racial or national background, and also the percentage of each group who named a second, non-ethnic identity. These figures indicate that two out of three blacks and nearly half the Latino citizens reported a problem which they felt was particularly troublesome for people of their race or ethnicity. The actual problems they mentioned, furthermore, appeared to reflect the circumstances of their respective groups. The vast majority of blacks referred to either

unemployment, discrimination, crime, or drug abuse. Latinos, on the other hand, were especially likely to refer to the need for more and better education. Far fewer respondents named a second, non-ethnic identity which makes them more concerned about particular problems. Whites were most likely to do so, while Latinos and Asians were least likely.

Aside from the question of the relative effect of ethnic and non-ethnic identifications, both of these measures of group-identity correspond to bases for political mobilization, as described above. To the extent that either measure is related to participation, we believe there is some indication of group-based activity. If the ethnic-identity measure functions this way, then there is evidence for an ethnic effect via ethnic group mobilization.

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Finally, we consider the interpretation of any effects associated with ethnicity which cannot be accounted for by either our battery of exogenous socioeconomic and demographic variables or by our indicators of group consciousness. Although the significant amount of measurement error which are associated with survey research may well be the source of such residue, we feel that it is important to consider additional culture-based explanations. Almond and Verba (1963), for instance, found that varying proportions of citizens in the five nations they studied had either "parochial," "subject," or "participant" orientations, with each orientation associated with a complex of beliefs and a specific level of political activity. Latino immigrants come from polities with more "parochials," and may therefore be less active (see also, Buehler, 1977). A cost-benefit argument leads to a similar prediction; many Asian and Latino immigrants come from countries with a single dominant party where elections produce little party alternation. (See McDonough, 1971, on effects of party competition.)

Additionally, there have been suggestions of variations in cultural norms with respect to integration into the larger society (Kitano, 1969). In the analysis to follow we do not explicitly investigate culturally derived attitudes which might be associated with different levels of participation. However, we do allow for the presence of residual cultural differences by retaining the ethnic group dummy variables in the equations we estimate.

ESTIMATION

The previous discussion of the common factors associated with political participation leads us to propose estimating a model of the following form:

$$Pr[Y=1] = F[X,G,Z]$$

where

X is a vector of the individual characteristics, including age, education, homeownership, which were reported in Table 3. These variables all enter the equation as [1,0] dummies except for age and for the percentage of his or lifetime that the respondent had spent in the U.S.

G is a pair of variables indicating group identifications, either ethnic or nonethnic, as reported in Table 4. These variables also enter the equation as dummies which take on the value of 1 if the respondent named a problem of special concern to his or her group, 0 otherwise.

Z is a vector of ethnicity variables coded as [1,0] dummies. These variables had been included in the previous analysis reported in Table 2.

Y is a vector of political activities coded as [1,0] dummies.

As before, this model is estimated with probit analysis. Results are reported in Table 5. The various demographic variables perform pretty much as expected. Older people are generally more active, except for the very old who are less so. Activity is higher among the college-educated and those who own homes.[15] Single mothers vote less and are less likely to contribute money, while living in a household with an unemployed head has a negative, although statistically insignificant, effect. We do find a gender difference for two forms of participation; men are more likely to contribute money and to say they have worked in a community group.

TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

The immigration-linked indicators also behave as expected. The greater the percentage of one's life spent outside the United States, the lower the likelihood of participating (except for a small effect in the other direction for contributing money). Even controlling for that percentage, persons who do not use English as their primary language are less active.

Both the measure of ethnic identity and that of non-ethnic group identity are positively related to all activities except voting. Naming an ethnic-group related problem or having a non-ethnic identity is related to registration; actually going to the polls entails something else. That the ethnic problem measure of group identity is positively related to activity suggests that there may be some mobilization on ethnic lines. That the non-ethnic identity variable matters suggests that other group-related phenomena also matter.

We are cautious about inferring direction of causality for some of our participation items. One might plausibly argue that persons who choose to work in a community group might as a consequence develop more awareness of

ethnic-group related problems. That a relationship exists is clear; we think it plausible that the causality often runs from the group-identity to participation instead of the reverse.

Does ethnicity still matter after controlling for other factors? With some qualifications, the answer is that the significance of the ethnic intercept disappears for Latinos, while the Asian-American ethnic intercept remains significant. Except for contacting officials, which retains a negative coefficient for all of the minority ethnic groups, once we control for the factors discussed above, no effect remains for a "Latino" variable. That is, the lower levels of participation we observed for Latinos can be explained by the other variables in our probit estimation. Thus, we conclude that no residual cultural factor is needed to explain Latinos' lower levels of participation; the set of demographic and group identity variables suffices.

The Asians, however, present a different picture. Even after all of the controls above, they remain less likely than whites to register, vote, and contact elected officials. In fact, since they are relatively high on the various socio-economic variables, the controls do little to reduce the disparity between them and the other groups. To further explore their situation, we repeated the estimation splitting the Asians into nationality groups, as before. (The coefficients are reported in Appendix Table A.2) Again, in light of the few cases in each category, these results are at best suggestive. The Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans are among the less likely to contact officials. The Filipinos and Other Asian-Americans are somewhat more likely than whites to make their opinions known through the news media, balancing out a statistically insignificant negative effect in the other groups.

With respect to voting and registration, the data indicate that it is Japanese who are particularly unlikely to register and to vote, with some of the same effect among Filipinos. Let us be clear on what this finding means. The negative effect among Japanese is accentuated by our demographic controls, since they are high on these independent variables. Our finding is consistent with Kitano's: "If we use knowledge of political issues, active participation in political organizations, and the like as criteria . . . the Japanese American, at least at this stage of his acculturation, is an apolitical population." (Kitano, 1969, p. 138). The result suggests that the lower electoral participation rates observed among Asians will not simply go away as a result of economic advances and length of time in the United States. A full explanation requires in-depth examination of the role of electoral politics within these communities.

The results reported above for Latinos, on the other hand, suggest that their case resembles that of blacks. Namely, once one compares persons of similar socioeconomic position, differences in participation evaporate (again, parallel to blacks, with the exception of contacting officials). Of course, in the case of Latinos, unlike that of blacks, speaking English and having been in the United States for a while also increase participation.

Thus, citizens are more active as they are older, but not too old, better educated, better off, and longer resident in the U.S.[16] Ethnicity matters after controlling for demographics and for group consciousness for Asians but not for Latinos. Ethnicity matters for all of the minority groups as a basis for mobilization, as captured in the "ethnic problem" measure of group consciousness.

WHO ARE THE PARTICIPATING NON-CITIZENS?

As our sample contains 261 non-citizens, it provides a unique opportunity to examine their behavior. Non-citizens do participate, especially in activities in which they directly present their views or work on some issue. What differentiates the active non-citizens from those who do not take part in American politics?

We used a slightly different model to examine this question than we used for citizen participation. Some variables we omitted simply because there was little variance (for instance, only 15 of the non-citizens were single mothers, and about the same number mentioned a non-ethnic identity; even fewer are older than 65). The main variable we added was one intended to capture the extent to which these individuals had commitments to their country of origin. Non-citizens were coded one on this dummy variable if they have social links to their country of origin, or send money there, or have considered going back there to live (as opposed to being pretty sure they will always live in the United States). Finally, since all of these respondents were born outside of the United States, we reversed the variable on the percentage of time spent abroad so that it now reflects the percentage of their life which they have lived in the United States.

Because non-citizens are barred by law from registering, voting, and contributing money, we estimate the models only for working in groups, contacting officials, and contacting news media.

TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

Table 6 reports the results of the estimations. A number of the standard socioeconomic variables are not especially significant, although the signs go in the appropriate directions. The most interesting, and most consistent,

effect comes from the variable measuring percentage of life spent in the United States. The greater the proportion of his or her life a non-citizen has spent in the United States, the more likely he or she is to take part in one of these activities. This conclusion holds especially for working in groups and contacting news media; the effect is much smaller for contacting elected officials. Once length of stay in the country is controlled, language has an additional effect only for contacting news media; non-English speakers are less likely to do so.

Non-citizens who believe that they do have a problem related to their ethnicity are clearly more likely to report having worked in a community group to solve a problem. We can interpret this finding two ways: non-citizens are active if they have group consciousness or if they have interests to pursue, or both. Non-citizens with ethnic problems are also more likely to contact officials; again, either interpretation could hold. Those non-citizens who are linked to their country of origin, in the ways discussed above, are less likely to express their views to news media.

Finally, and in contrast to citizens, older non-citizens are less likely to contact either the media or officials than are younger ones. Note that age is not simply picking up cohort differences in language or education, as we control for those variables explicitly. In addition, we control for percentage of life spent in the U.S. We speculate that the age result reflects a greater willingness by young people to try out new behaviors.[17]

Overall, it appears that non-citizens participate in part for the same reasons as citizens. Beyond that, though, non-citizens appear to be more active as they perceive that they have group-specific problems in need of solution, as they have been residents longer, as they are less closely linked to their country of origin, and as they are younger.

PROJECTIONS OF FUTURE PARTICIPATION RATES

Finally, what levels of participation might we expect to see in the future? Social scientists are notoriously poor prognosticators; however, our estimations allow us to suggest what activity levels might look like under several different scenarios. We are particularly interested in what may happen to registration, to voting rates, to the likelihood of contacting elected officials, and to working in groups.

The first scenario we label "Americanization;" if the flow of immigration were to stop, the Latino and Asian populations would become older, would have resided longer on average in the United States, and would contain fewer non-English speakers and non-native born. We assume that socioeconomic levels do not shift. In our second scenario, "Party Recruitment," we assume that nothing changes except that the parties work hard and engender loyalty among Asians and Latinos. The demographic factors we assume remain the same; a continued flow of immigration has kept the numbers of new arrivals and non-English speakers up, and social mobility has not increased. Consider, next, the possibility that socio-economic mobility occurs without assimilation; the minorities enjoy upward economic and educational mobility while remaining young and non-English speaking (for example, by developing a successful parallel economy with continuing immigration flows). Under our fourth scenario we assume that the demographic changes of Americanization occur as well as the party recruitment of the second scenario, but despite these changes economic and educational mobility are blocked. Finally, we consider the possibility that assimilation works; all the elements of the Americanization scenario take place and in addition the minorities experience upward economic and educational mobility. Under this scenario, parties are assumed not to be any more active than currently.

We emphasize that our projections are a ceteris parabus exercise; all of our projections depend upon the restrictive assumption that the coefficients in the estimation remain unchanged in the face of these transformations. Some of them are in fact likely to change. For instance, under the Americanization scenario, if the numbers of non-English speakers dropped radically, a similar estimation might well yield a different coefficient for that variable.

We begin by looking at citizens only. Because we think parties could be important agents of change, we re-estimated our equations including dummy variables for strong and weak party identifiers (reported in Appendix Table A.3). We used the coefficents to construct projections as follows. For most of the independent variables, we used whites as a reference group; for percentage of strong partisans blacks defined the reference category. Then, for each other group we calculated the difference between their mean score on the variable and that of the reference group. We multiplied these differences by the probit coefficient. The result tells us how far along the normal density function that much of a shift in the independent variable would take the group. The corresponding increase in area under the curve corresponds to the additional percentage of group members who would take part in the activity, under our assumptions. The magnitude of the increase in proportion depends upon where we start on the curve; for each group, that will be the position corresponding to their current activity rate.[18]

TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

Table 7 summarizes our projections. We did not calculate projections for Asians under scenarios III or V as their mean education and mean score on the income indicators are already above those of the white sample. We did consider what might happen to white participation if partisanship were to

increase, and we considered how a change in the age structure (under I) or an increase in socioeconomic level (scenario III) would alter black activity.

Our projections show, first, that scenario I, Americanization, would be sufficient to bring Latino electoral participation rates close to those of blacks and whites; the addition of either stronger partisanship or socioeconomic advances, virtually wipes out the remaining differences. The same scenarios bring the rate of contacting officials up to the black rate, and then beyond it. Either Americanization or socioeconomic mobility increases the probability of working in groups; the combination of the two in the fifth scenario brings these rates to white levels. Among Asians, either the Americanization scenario or an increase in partisanship brings registration rates up to black and white levels; combining the two brings registration beyond white and black rates and voting up to that level. The Americanization scenario brings contacting and working in groups up past black levels.

Of course, the world does not change suddenly, and the proportion of non-English speakers will not instantaneously drop to zero. However, these projections lead us to believe that either normal demographic processes or the politicization of these electorates would be sufficient to raise participation rates substantially.

CONCLUSION

The rise in numbers of non-black minority groups in the United States has led to speculation about possible changes in American politics. Some foresee a "Rainbow Coalition," whether or not led by Jesse Jackson; others anticipate advantages for the Democrats, still others for the Republicans; some seers predict policy shifts of various kinds. A precondition for any of these changes to occur is that the members of these groups take part in politics.

We began this paper by establishing that Latinos and Asian-Americans do, in fact, participate less in politics than do non-Hispanic whites or blacks. One factor important in this difference is the large proportion of Latinos and Asian-Americans who are not citizens; since these people are not eligible to vote, inclusion of them in the base for calculating turnout provides a misleading impression of the activity of the eligibles. However, even restricting attention to citizens, Latinos and Asian-Americans register and vote at lower rates than whites and blacks.

This difference in activity could be due to cultural factors, such as a community norm to avoid political involvement, or a learned attitude that electoral politics are a waste of time. On the other hand, the difference in activity could be spuriously related to ethnicity and instead reflect differences across groups in the distribution of other characteristics which lead to participation. In the latter case, one could expect political activity to increase naturally as the distribution of these characteristics became more favorable. In the former case, the differences in activity would persist, until and unless assimilation occurred or the norms of the community changed; neither of these contingencies can be expected to occur as a matter of course.

The analysis showed that the Asian-Americans fit the non-spurious case; even with the controls, Asian-Americans are less active. We do not believe that one can simply offer "culture" as an explanation; clearly we would like to know what it is about being Asian-American that depresses political activity. What we can say is that whatever it is comes from outside of this set of determinants of activity. Until we know what this effect comes from, it seems likely that the linear extrapolation involved in our projections most likely yields predictions that are too high.

Latinos, on the other hand, fit the spurious relationship case; controlling for demographic and related determinants of activity wipes out the effect of Latino ethnicity, confirming the results of Antunes and Gaitz (1975). In the case of Latinos, then, our projections have some plausibility. If the population ages and becomes more native born, more English speaking, if its education and income level increases, then we do expect to see substantial increases in activity. Ethnicity per se has no independent effect.

Group consciousness does, however, matter, for activities other than voting. Persons who believe that their ethnic group has specific problems, as well as those who have some non-ethnic group identity, are more likely to give money, to contact, or to work in groups. Ethnicity may provide a basis for the mobilization of activity. In this sense, ethnicity does matter. Moreoever, these data support the theoretical argument that group affiliation matters.

In this regard, we find suggestive one difference between Latinos and blacks, on the one hand, and Asian-Americans, on the other. Members of the first two groups have entered politics as self-identified representatives of their racial or ethnic group and, once in office, have interacted extensively with community leaders. Partly due to differences in residential concentration, Asian-American politicians rarely represent predominantly Asian districts and infrequently make their ethnicity central to their politics. Although causality probably goes in both directions, we suspect the leadership structures and patterns of participation are related.

Our projection exercise suggests that the parties can play an important role in shaping the political future. Even with little change in the demographic characteristics of the population, successful party recruitment can result in significantly higher rates of activity. The consequences for

politics will depend upon which party gets there first. Our projections are not meant to imply that politics are independent of economic mobility. Political organization by parties, especially if it does in fact increase activity as we project can be a tool used to increase access of minorities to the fruits of economic mobility.

APPENDIX A: Estimations with Disaggregated Asian-American Category

Table A.1 Probit Estimations of Citizens' Participation on Ethnicity (Asian category disaggregated)

Independent Variables	Registered in 1984	Voted in 1984	Contributed Money	Worked in Groups	Contacted Media	Contacted Officials
Latino	−.56*	−.59	−.26	−.32	−.07	−.57
	(.11)**	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)
Black	.11	.06	−.12	.12	−.09	−.27
	(.13)	(.12)	(.12)	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)
Chinese	−.02	−.28	−.07	−.23	−.09	−.52
	(.25)	(.21)	(.23)	(.21)	(.23)	(.21)
Japanese	−.47	−.28	.21	.15	−.07	−.39
	(.20)	(.19)	(.19)	(.18)	(.20)	(.18)
Korean	−.14	−.15	.03	−.04	.01	−.23
	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.06)
Filipino	−.56	−.36	−.10	−.08	.45	−.41
	(.25)	(.25)	(.27)	(.24)	(.24)	(.24)
Other Asian	−.38	−.09	.19	−.18	.34	−.29
	(.34)	(.34)	(.33)	(.32)	(.32)	(.31)
Constant	1.14	.85	−.78	−.41	−.77	.01
	(.09)	(.08)	(.08)	(.07)	(.08)	(.07)
Log likelihood						
Initial	−830	−830	−826	−830	−831	−829
At convergence	−554	−677	−575	−734	−614	−768
N	1197	1198	1191	1197	1199	1196
Percent participating	81	73	19	32	21	37

* Probit coefficient
** Standard error of coefficient

Table A.2 Probit Estimations of Citizens' Participation (Asian-American Category Disaggregated)

Independent Variables	Registered in 1984	Voted in 1984	Contributed Money	Worked in Groups	Contacted Media	Contacted Officials
Latino	−.10*	−.11	.01	−.11	.02	−.28
	(.14)**	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.11)
Black	.16	.12	−.10	.02	−.15	−.33
	(.15)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.11)
Chinese	.26	−.03	−.18	−.21	−.11	−.38
	(.28)	(.24)	(.26)	(.24)	(.24)	(.23)
Japanese	−.59	−.43	.19	.15	−.07	−.44
	(.21)	(.21)	(.20)	(.18)	(.20)	(.19)
Korean	−.04	−.05	−.00	.04	.05	−.16
	(.07)	(.07)	(.07)	(.07)	(.07)	(.07)
Filipino	−.37	−.16	−.17	.08	.56	−.25
	(.28)	(.27)	(.30)	(.27)	(.26)	(.26)
Other Asian	−.07	.23	.11	−.00	.49	−.06
	(.38)	(.37)	(.36)	(.37)	(.34)	(.33)
Age	.035	.040	.020	.008	−.002	.014
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
65 or older	−.49	−.75	−.21	−.24	−.01	−.31
	(.24)	(.21)	(.17)	(.16)	(.18)	(.16)
Some college	.64	.64	.48	.57	.44	.42
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Homeowner	.24	.23	.36	.12	.04	.18
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Head unemployed	−.03	−.11	−.05	.04	−.07	−.15
	(.13)	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.11)
Single mother	−.02	−.27	−.36	.00	.09	.02
	(.16)	(.14)	(.16)	(.13)	(.14)	(.12)
Male	−.01	−.05	.27	.27	.09	−.03
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Pct. life not in U.S.	−.006	−.006	.003	−.007	−.005	−.003
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Non-English lang.	−.14	−.22	−.11	−.25	−.10	−.34
	(.13)	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Ethnic problem	.10	.08	.21	.41	.22	.16
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Non-ethnic identity	.37	.08	.23	.34	.19	.19
	(.17)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Constant	−.76	−1.22	−2.42	−1.47	−1.13	−.97
	(.21)	(.19)	(.22)	(.18)	(.19)	(.17)
Log likelihood						
Initial	−830	−830	−826	−830	−831	−829
At convergence	−475	−567	−521	−672	−589	−728
N	1197	1198	1191	1197	1199	1196
Percent participating	81	73	19	32	21	37

* Probit coefficient
** Standard error of coefficient

Table A.3 Probit Estimations of Participation Used in Projections (Citizens Only)

Independent Variables	Registered in 1984	Voted in 1984	Contributed Money	Worked in Groups	Contacted Media	Contacted Officials
Latino	−.18*	−.17	.02	−.09	.03	−.30
	(.14)**	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.11)
Black	.04	.01	−.16	.02	−.18	−.40
	(.16)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.11)
Asian-American	−.27	−.19	.07	.06	.12	−.36
	(.17)	(.15)	(.15)	(.14)	(.15)	(.14)
Age	.030	.039	.019	.009	−.003	.013
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
65 or older	−.42	−.72	−.22	−.25	.01	−.28
	(.24)	(.21)	(.17)	(.16)	(.18)	(.16)
Some college	.64	.63	.47	.56	.44	.40
	(.10)	(.10)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Homeowner	.25	.23	.35	.12	.04	.18
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Head unemployed	.05	−.06	−.04	.03	−.08	−.13
	(.13)	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Single mother	−.01	−.26	−.35	.01	.10	.03
	(.16)	(.14)	(.16)	(.13)	(.14)	(.12)
Male	.02	−.01	.29	.26	.09	−.01
	(.10)	(.10)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Pct. life not in U.S.	−.005	−.005	.002	−.006	−.003	−.003
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Non-English lang.	−.09	−.20	−.12	−.27	−.12	−.35
	(.13)	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Ethnic problem	.08	.07	.20	.40	.22	.16
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Non-ethnic identity	.42	.11	.25	.33	.19	.20
	(.18)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Strong partisan	.85	.69	.26	−.09	.01	.30
	(.12)	(.11)	(.11)	(.10)	(.10)	(.10)
Weak partisan	.44	.34	−.07	−.20	−.29	.01
	(.11)	(.10)	(.12)	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)
Constant	−.98	−1.44	−2.47	−1.38	−1.02	−1.02
	(.22)	(.204)	(.22)	(.19)	(.19)	(.18)
Log likelihood						
Initial	−830	−830	−826	−830	−831	−829
Convergence	−453	−548	−517	−671	−588	−722
N	1197	1198	1191	1197	1199	1196
Percent participating	81	73	19	31	21	37

* Probit coefficient
** Standard error of coefficient

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE DESIGN

The major problem we faced in designing the survey was that of efficiently reaching large numbers of adult individuals from the three major racial and ethnic minorities in California--Latinos (primarily Mexican Americans), blacks, and Asians, who, according to the 1980 Census, constituted 19%, 8%, and 5% of the state population respectively. Because of the younger age structure of the groups, black and Latino percentages of adults are somewhat smaller than their percentages of the total population.

Given a large enough budget, say several hundred thousand dollars, we would probably have preferred a Michigan style areal sampling framework with a field staff going door-to-door to interview respondents in their own homes. Most comparisons between in-person interviews and telephone interviews indicate that the former technique entails a lower refusal rate and less bias in the resultant sample of completed interviews. However, one worries how well in-person interviews would work in neighborhoods with large proportions of recent Asian or Latino arrivals, as undocumented residents might be extremely suspicious of interviewers coming to their doors. Telephone interviews seem less obtrusive, and possibly preferable for that reason. The main reason we chose to do telephone interviews, however, was cost, as budget constraints ruled out the expense of in-person interviews.

With telephone interviewing the most common sample selection technique is random digit dialing. RDD is not without problems. In many areas there still exists some bias resulting from the not-quite-complete saturation of telephone ownership. And, although we have seen no reference to this problem in the literature on polling, we suspect that an increasingly important source of bias here is the growing use of telephone answering machines to

screen incoming phone calls. More serious, of course, is the unavoidable selection bias in any opinion survey resulting from the fact that participation is voluntary. The potential for biases resulting from the differential incidence of telephone ownership and differential refusal rates is likely to be more serious in surveys in which minority group members constitute a large portion of the target population. Whatever the case, the virtues of sampling via random digit dialing have made it the standard choice in telephone surveys.

In large part because of its sampling virtues, however, RDD is an extremely inefficient method for contacting members of minority groups, at least in California. Ideally one could draw a sample of telephone exchanges via probability weights which would yield the desired minority group proportions. In fact, if one were interested only in oversampling blacks, this technique would suffice. For Latinos and for Asians, however, the high level of residential segregation and
resultant strong correlation between telephone exchange areas and census units (the necessary demographic data are not available for telephone exchanges) which is needed for this technique to be effective simply do not exist. This problem is bad enough for contacting Latinos. Asians, however, are an extreme case in this regard. Of the 5050 census tracts in California in the 1980 Census, only 33 (0.6%) were 40% or more Asian. Even if telephone exchanges could be weighted in a skewed enough fashion to increase significantly the probability of contacting Asian respondents (something of which we are not altogether sure) the resultant sample of Asians interviewed would be problematic. Most blacks live in neighborhoods which are predominately black. The vast majority of Asians, however, do not live in

predominately Asian neighborhoods, and so a sample based primarily on those who do would likely be quite unrepresentative.

Given these problems, we decided that the least problematic way of generating the Latino and Asian subsamples would be on the basis of surnames. Oversampling of blacks, on the other hand, could be done on the basis of residence. We therefore began by randomly selecting a list of 300 census tracts in California. DialAmerica Corporation of Cleveland, Ohio provided us with the names, current phone numbers, and addresses of 80-100 individuals per tract for approximately 90% of the tracts, thus yielding a list of 24,523 names. We ran these through Hispanic and Asian surname dictionaries, yielding subsample Ns of 3306 and 1170, respectively. We then drew a 20% sample of the remaining 20,047 names, weighting the census tracts corresponding to each name so as to generate another subsample which would contain roughly equal proportions of whites and blacks. (We doubled the selection probability for tracts in which 50% or more of the residents are black.) Because of this sampling procedure, we use weights on the white and black subsamples when calculating marginal percentages. (The weights give double weight to respondents residing outside the heavily black tracts but are adjusted to keep the total subsample n unchanged.)

As indicated earlier, one of our chief interests was to compare the experiences and attitudes of Asians who had recently immigrated to this country with those of recently arrived Latinos. In order to increase our sample of recent Asian immigrants, we drew a supplemental sample of Korean surnames from the 1984 Korean Telephone Directory of Southern California. The creators of this directory believe that it contains the telephone numbers and addresses of over 75% of all Koreans in Southern California. We ultimately conducted interviews with 80 Korean Americans via this supplemental sample.

According to Leuthold and Scheele (1971), samples which are derived from telephone directories will, relative to RDD, undersample blacks, individuals who are separated or divorced, and city dwellers. Although the percentage of individuals in our base sample of 25,523 who were Asian--4.8%--was almost identical to the 1980 Census figures, the number of Latino names drawn was definitely less than that in the background population--13.5%, compared to 19% in the 1980 sample. The fact that we ultimately interviewed about 25% more whites than blacks also suggests that there were fewer blacks in the base sample than there should have been.

By itself, of course, the only problem caused by this undersampling is that our subsample Ns were not as large as we might have desired. A far greater potential problem is that the individuals we interviewed, regardless of whether they were white, black, Asian, or Latino, all had listed telephone numbers and addresses. This could make them somewhat unrepresentative sets of people (less likely to be poor, more likely to be legal residents).

As we have intimated, however, we were more worried about refusal rates than many other potential sources of bias. Given the large number of minority group members in our target population, we expected relatively high refusal rates. This in fact turned out to be the case--only 44% of the individuals we contacted who were eligible to be interviewed agreed to do so. Although we cannot be sure about the characteristics of the people who refused to be interviewed, it appears that refusal rates were particularly high among Asians and those who were likely to be black. As far as we could tell, however, refusal rates were no higher among Latinos than among whites.

Given the potential problems we faced, we were understandably interested in how well the characteristics of the people we interviewed matched up with data from the 1980 Census. The figures reported in Table 1 indicate that in

some respects the individuals in our four subsamples were quite representative, while in other respects they were somewhat unrepresentative. In all four subsamples the reported figures for family income and country of birth were quite consistent with figures derived from the 1980 Census. There are , however, some discrepancies. The percentages of blacks and Latinos in our sample who reported being homeowners were higher than the Census figures. We also tended to oversample Asian men and black women. Reported education, though, was the source of the largest discrepancies. Individuals in all four subsamples were considerably more likely to report having attended college than the 1980 Census figures indicate should be the case. However, we are inclined to blame very little of the education bias we observed on our use of a telephone directory sample versus RDD. Warren Miller indicates that the sample of individuals interviewed in the 1984 Michigan Rolling Cross-section (which was a telephone survey) had a considerably higher average education than those interviewed in person in the traditional post-election survey.

Because participation in opinion surveys is voluntary (at least in liberal democratic societies) we believe that regardless of the sampling framework employed there is an irreducible element of self-selection bias generated by the differential propensity of different types of people to submit to the interview. In political polls this self-selection bias is quite naturally related to the extent to which the potential respondent is intellectually involved with things political--people are more likely to talk to strangers about subjects they care about and know something about than about subjects they don't know about or care about. This bias will yield us samples which are, compared to the population at large, more educated, more literate, more interested, and more knowledgeable about ongoing political

issues. Any incidental bias deriving from telephone directory versus RDD sampling was at least for us, apparently minimal.

TABLE B.1

COMPARISON OF SAMPLE AND CENSUS CHARACTERISTICS

	White	Black	Latino	Asian
Percent Male				
Sample 1984	49%	38%	49%	60%
Census 1980	49	49	51	48
Percent Owner Occupiers				
Sample 1984	66	64	52	64
Census 1980	62	45	44	62
Family Income < 10K				
Sample 1984	12	25	21	9
Census 1980	16	34	27	14
Family Income 10-25K				
Sample 1984	44	41	47	35
Census 1980	40	40	48	37
Family Income over 25K				
Sample 1984	44	33	32	56
Census 1980	44	26	25	49
Percent Native Born				
Sample 1984	94	98	60	38
Census 1980	90	98	63	42
Percent Some College or Greater				
Sample 1984	60	53	34	77
Census 1980	44	36	20	54

Table 1 Percent Participating in Political Activities (by Ethnic Group)

	Non-Hispanic Whites	Blacks	Latinos	Asian-Americans
Voted in 1984				
All	76	80	44	48
Citizens	80	81	60	69
Registered				
All	82	87	53	55
Citizens	87	88	72	77
Contributed money				
All	20	17	12	18
Citizens	–	–	15	24
Non-citizens	–	–	6	4
Displayed poster/sticker				
All	8	10	10	6
Citizens	–	–	11	4
Non-citizens	–	–	9	6
Worked on campaigns				
All	6	5	3	3
Citizens	–	–	4	4
Non-citizens	–	–	1	2
Attended political rally				
All	15	16	9	8
Citizens	–	–	12	11
Non-citizens	–	–	3	4
Contacted officials				
All	47	37	25	26
Citizens	–	–	29	31
Non-citizens	–	–	18	20
Contacted media				
All	22	20	18	25
Citizens	–	–	20	25
Non-citizens	–	–	11	23
Worked with group to solve community problem				
All	33	38	19	24
Citizens	–	–	24	32
Non-citizens	–	–	11	11
Number of respondents				
All	317	335	574	308
Citizens	300	313	387	199
Non-citizens	14	4	159	84

Table 2 Probit Estimations of Participation on Ethnicity (Citizens Only)

Independent Variables	Registered in 1984	Voted in 1984	Contributed Money	Worked in Groups	Contacted Media	Contacted Officials
Latino	−.56*	−.59	−.26	−.32	−.07	−.57
	(.11)**	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)
Black	.11	.06	−.12	.12	−.09	−.27
	(.13)	(.12)	(.12)	(.10)	(.11)	(.10)
Asian-American	−.41	−.35	.08	−.07	.09	−.51
	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Constant	1.14	.85	−.78	−.41	−.77	.01
	(.09)	(.08)	(.08)	(.07)	(.08)	(.07)
Log likelihood						
Initial	−830	−830	−826	−830	−831	−829
At convergence	−556	−678	−576	−736	−617	−771
N	1197	1198	1191	1197	1199	1196
Percent participating	81	73	19	32	21	37

* Probit coefficient
** Standard error of coefficient

Table 3 Distribution of Demographic and Socioeconomic Variables by Ethnicity (Citizens Only)*

	Non-Hispanic Whites	Blacks	Latinos	Asian-Americans
Mean age (years)	45	44	35	38
65 or older	20	17	6	7
Some college	58	57	40	77
Homeowner	64	61	58	74
Head unemployed	12	17	17	7
Single mother	11	25	12	4
Male	48	38	46	59
Non-English lang.	7	2	42	37
Foreign born	4	1	15	47
N	300	313	387	199

* All numbers are percentages except where indicated.

Table 4 Distribution of Group References by Ethnicity

	Non-Hispanic Whites	Blacks	Latinos	Asian-Americans
Percent naming a racial, ethnic, or nationality problem				
Citizens	25	67	46	32
Non-citizens	16	–*	50	45
Percent naming a second, non-ethnic identity				
Citizens	17	14	8	9
Non-citizens	24	–*	5	5
Percent with a non-english primary language				
Citizens	7	2	42	37
Non-citizens	52	–*	88	86

* insufficient cases

Table 5 Probit Estimations of Citizens' Participation

Independent Variables	Registered in 1984	Voted in 1984	Contributed Money	Worked in Groups	Contacted Media	Contacted Officials
Latino	–.13*	–.13	.02	–.10	.02	–.30
	(.14)**	(.13)	(.13)	(.12)	(.12)	(.11)
Black	.15	.12	–.10	.02	–.15	–.33
	(.15)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.11)
Asian	–.30	–.22	.04	.05	.11	–.38
	(.16)	(.15)	(.15)	(.14)	(.14)	(.14)
Age	.03	.04	.02	.01	.00	.01
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
65 or older	–.44	–.72	–.23	–.25	.006	–.30
	(.23)	(.21)	(.17)	(.16)	(.18)	(.16)
Some college	.65	.64	.47	.56	.44	.41
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Homeowner	.26	.24	.35	.11	.03	.17
	(.09)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Head unemployed	–.03	–.11	–.04	.05	–.06	–.14
	(.13)	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Single mother	–.03	–.27	–.35	.01	.09	.02
	(.16)	(.14)	(.16)	(.13)	(.14)	(.12)
Male	–.02	–.05	.28	.27	.10	–.02
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.08)
Pct. life not in U.S.	–.005	–.005	.002	–.006	–.003	–.003
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Non-English lang.	–.11	–.20	–.12	–.26	–.11	–.35
	(.13)	(.12)	(.14)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Ethnic problem	.12	.09	.20	.40	.22	.16
	(.10)	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.08)
Non-ethnic identity	.37	.08	.23	.34	.19	.19
	(.17)	(.14)	(.13)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)
Constant	–.70	–1.20	–2.44	–1.47	–1.13	–.98
	(.21)	(.19)	(.22)	(.18)	(.19)	(.17)
Log likelihood						
Initial	–830	–830	–826	–830	–831	–829
At convergence	–478	–569	–522	–673	–593	–729
N	1197	1198	1191	1197	1199	1196
Percent participating	81	73	19	31	21	37

* Probit coefficient
** Standard error of coefficient

Table 6 Probit Estimations of Non-Citizens' Participation

Independent Variables	Worked in Groups	Contacted Media	Contacted Officials
Age	−.006*	−.015	−.015
	(.010)**	(.009)	(.009)
Some college	.19	.18	.04
	(.23)	(.21)	(.19)
Head unemployed	−.49	−.27	−.19
	(.33)	(.27)	(.24)
Male	.12	.14	.16
	(.24)	(.21)	(.20)
Pct. life in U.S.	.008	.009	.005
	(.005)	(.004)	(.004)
Non-English lang.	.12	−.60	−.21
	(.35)	(.26)	(.27)
Ethnic problem	.78	.19	.33
	(.24)	(.21)	(.19)
Linked to country of origin	.19	−.58	−.29
	(.38)	(.29)	(.29)
Constant	−2.16	−.10	−.44
	(.71)	(.49)	(.50)
Log likelihood			
Initial	−180	−180	−179
At convergence	−78	−97	−115
N	259	259	258
Percent participating	11	15	18

* Probit coefficient
** Standard error of coefficient

Table 7 Projected Participation Rates of Citizens under Various Scenarios (by Ethnicity)

	Current Rates	Scenario I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
Register						
Non-Hispanic Whites	87	–	90	–	–	–
Blacks	88	88	–	88	–	–
Latinos	72	81	78	76	86	85
Asian-Americans	77	85	84	–	90	–
Vote						
Non-Hispanic Whites	80	–	84	–	–	–
Blacks	81	82	–	82	–	–
Latinos	60	74	66	65	79	78
Asian-Americans	69	77	76	–	83	–
Contact Officials						
Non-Hispanic Whites	47	–	–	–	–	–
Blacks	37	37	–	38	–	–
Latinos	29	37	32	32	40	41
Asian-Americans	31	40	34	–	43	–
Work in Groups						
Non-Hispanic Whites	33	–	–	–	–	–
Blacks	38	–	–	–	–	–
Latinos	24	30	–	28	–	34
Asian-Americans	32	42	–	–	–	–

I. Americanization (Aging, Language)
II. Party Recruitment
III. Socio-Economic Mobility
IV. Americanization and Party Recruitment
V. Americanization and Socio-Economic Mobility

NOTES

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1. In another paper we take up the question of similarities and differences in issue preferences.

2. In the 1980 National Election Study, 147 black respondents but only 48 Latinos reached the turnout questions in the interview; in 1984 the numbers were higher but too low still for detailed analysis (115 Latinos and 222 blacks). Oversampling has been used at times to increase the number of black respondents, although rarely for the other groups. Analyses based upon Census data, like Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980), have sufficient numbers of respondents but a very limited set of political variables. Studies which target particular communities can by appropriate selection of sites capture large numbers of minority respondents (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb (1984) is one of the best such studies); the admirable depth gained in such studies comes at some cost in generalizability.

3. One consequence of the design is that the sample is not representative of the state population, per se. Thus, frequencies can only be interpreted within each of the four sampled groups.

4. For discussions of the definition of political participation, see Verba and Nie, 1972, p. 2 and Geraint Parry, 1972, pp. 18-31.

5. The high reported black turnout reflects the abnormally high education and income levels of our black sample. Sample and census characteristics for the other groups match better. (See Appendix B, Table B.1.) In addition, some evidence indicates that blacks tend to over-report their voting (Abramson and Claggett, 1984, 1986).

6. We made no attempt to determine which of our respondents were undocumented alien residents; such a question would quickly have terminated interview. We presume that our sample tends toward legal, documented aliens, as they are more likely to have listed telephone numbers and to be willing to give an interview.

7. Unfortunately, we did not establish which media. Other aspects of our analysis suggest that these people are probably expressing opinions in the ethnic press, which is well-developed in certain Asian-American communities.

8. Other theorists focus upon the structural factors which facilitate or impede participation. In rational actor terms, these factors are components of the cost term. Burnham (1970, pp. 71-90) points to the introduction of registration, literacy requirements, and nonpartisan ballots to account for long-term changes in turnout. Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980, pp. 61-89) have carefully analyzed the contemporary effect of different states' registration requirements upon levels of voting. These effects are clearly important, but provide little leverage here, as we deal with only one time point within one state.

9. The one major variable suggested by the rational actor tradition which we omit is perceived closeness of an election outcome. Despite its theoretical plausibility, "closeness" has performed only weakly in empirical analyses. See Foster (1984) for a review of the studies and Grofman (1983)

and Uhlaner and Grofman (1986) for a discussion of the difficulties in using measures of closeness.

10. Other theorists have managed to produce a prediction of activity; Ledyard (1981, 1984) uses a general equilibrium approach, while Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974, 1975) posit minimax-regret rationality. Ledyard's solution breaks down in large electorates. Mimimax-regret has not been embraced by other theorists as the solution.

11. The following argument has been developed in considerably more detail elsewhere by one of the authors (Uhlaner, 1980, 1986a, 1986b).

12. This argument rests upon the existence of group affiliations, and depends, in the argument about normative benefits, upon people caring about maintaining their group affiliation. These issues are addressed, and "relational goods" proposed as part of a solution, in Uhlaner, 1986b.

13. Our approach differs from that of the NES. The 1984 studies asked: "Sometimes people think about <u>other</u> groups of people in society when they think about their own economic well-being, people who are being helped or hurt by economic conditions. When it comes to economic matters, what groups of people do <u>you</u> feel closest to? (IF R DOESN'T KNOW WHAT WE MEAN BY "GROUPS": Some people have mentioned farmers, the elderly, teachers, blacks, and union members.)" The pre/post study also repeated the by-now standard group identification items: "Here is a list of groups. Please read over the list and tell me the letter for those groups you feel particularly close to — <u>people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things</u>" followed by: "Look at the list again. Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel closest to?" The new item asks about identification with respect to the economic sphere, which may or may not be the one most salient to respondents. Thirty percent of respondents reply "poor," "middle class," or "working class." The old item focuses on

subjective similarity and has consistently yielded significant numbers of men identifying with women, whites with blacks, young with elderly, and so forth. Our item has a more specifically political referent than the old NES item, but a broader one (not restricted to economics) than the new one. We also used various other items in some of the estimations, such as perception of one's group as relatively disadvantaged or as discriminated against; results were not substantially different.

14. To take another example, census enumeration can strengthen ethnic and racial identity. Latino leaders lobbied very hard for a special category designated "Hispanics" in the 1980 census so that Latinos would get their "fair" share of federal program allocations and district boundaries that more fairly reflected their potential political strength.

15. For education, we did a number of estimations using years of schooling, but found that most of the play came from the split between those who had no college education and those who had at least some. We thus use a dummy variable coded 1 for those who have at least some college education; one advantage of using such a dummy is that we need not assume a linear effect from years of schooling.

16. We ran some estimations separately for each ethnic group, thereby permitting coefficients to vary between the groups. The most interesting findings from these estimations concern gender; for most activities, black women are more active than black men, while Latino and Asian men are more active than women of the same ethnicity. These gender effects are reassuringly consistent with our other information on the culture of the groups in question. One other finding has no obvious explanation; education, measured as years in school, had negligible effects upon Asian participation rates.

17. That is, we see the negative age coefficient as supporting Converse's (1969) argument about increased resistance to learning as people age. Black, Niemi, and Powell (forthcoming), however, get contradictory results with a sample of Toronto immigrants.

18. For example, currently thirty percent fewer Asians than blacks identify strongly with a political party. The probit coefficient on strong partisanship in the estimation of registration is .85. If strong partisanship among Asians increases by .30, .26 (.85 x .30) will be added to the estimated probit value. As 77 percent of Asian citizens are currently registered, the group begins .74 of a standard deviation above the normal distribution mean. Moving from .74 to 1.00 corresponds to an increase of .07 in area under the curve, or an increase of 7 percent in persons registered. Thus, we would project that if as many Asians become strong partisans as is currently the case among blacks, then Asian registration rates would increase from 77 percent to 84 percent.

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